

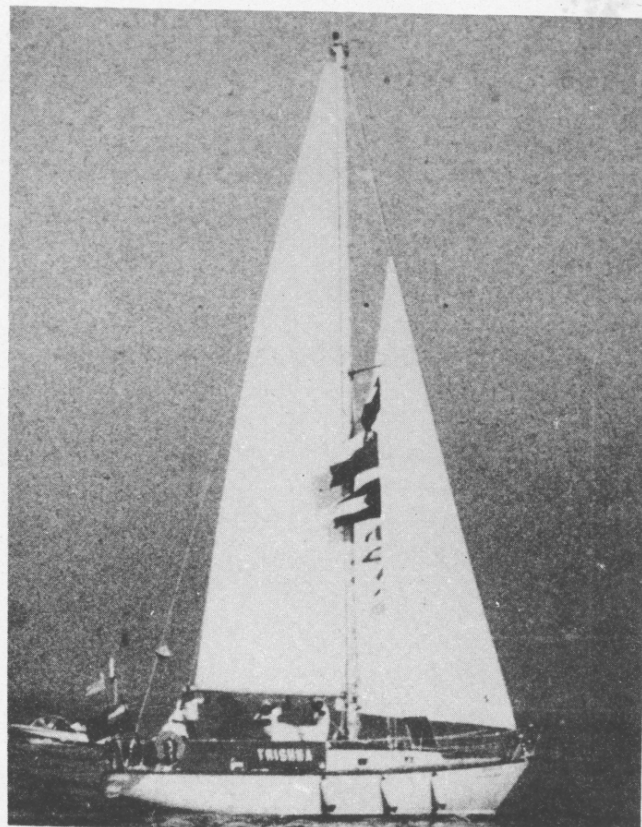
AROUND THE WORLD IN A YACHT

By Colonel TPS Chowdhury

"She has a sloop rig, a long keel and a skeg, making her very sea-kindly in rough weather and respected by yachtsmen all over the world. The yacht was renamed 'TRISHNA' which means an urge to attain and accomplish a deep-rooted desire"

The Sapper Adventure Foundation, which is a member, of the Army Adventure Foundation, has again undertaken a new venture in ocean sailing — a Sailing Expedition Around the World. This is the first time that any Indians are attempting to sail around the World in a small yacht. This expedition has been organised by a Committee with Shri KP Singh Deo as the Patron-in-Chief, Lt Gen RK Dhawan, ADC as the Patron, Lt Gen LM Misra, Maj Gen HK Kapoor (Retd), Maj Gen JP Sharma, Brig AL Suri, AVSM, Brig SN Endley and Col TPS Chowdhury, as Members.

Ten Officers of the Corps of Engineers are attempting to circumnavigate the globe, covering a distance of approximately 30,000 nautical miles or 50,000 kms in one and a half to two years. They set sail on 28 Sept 85 from Bombay in a 37-foot fibre glass yacht named 'Trishna', seen off by the Chief of the Army Staff and reached Male (Maldives) on 7 Oct 85. After refilling water, buying fresh food, and a brief rest, they left Malé on 09 Oct for Mauritius, where they reached in the early hours of 25 Oct. From Bombay to Malé, they encountered three to four gales owing to the bad weather enroute. Winds from 20-25 knots were experienced. They had a slight damage to their VHF and HF aerials, which were duly repaired. The voyage from Malé to Port Louis in Mauritius was a fast one when they covered almost 140-160 nautical miles per day. They received steady

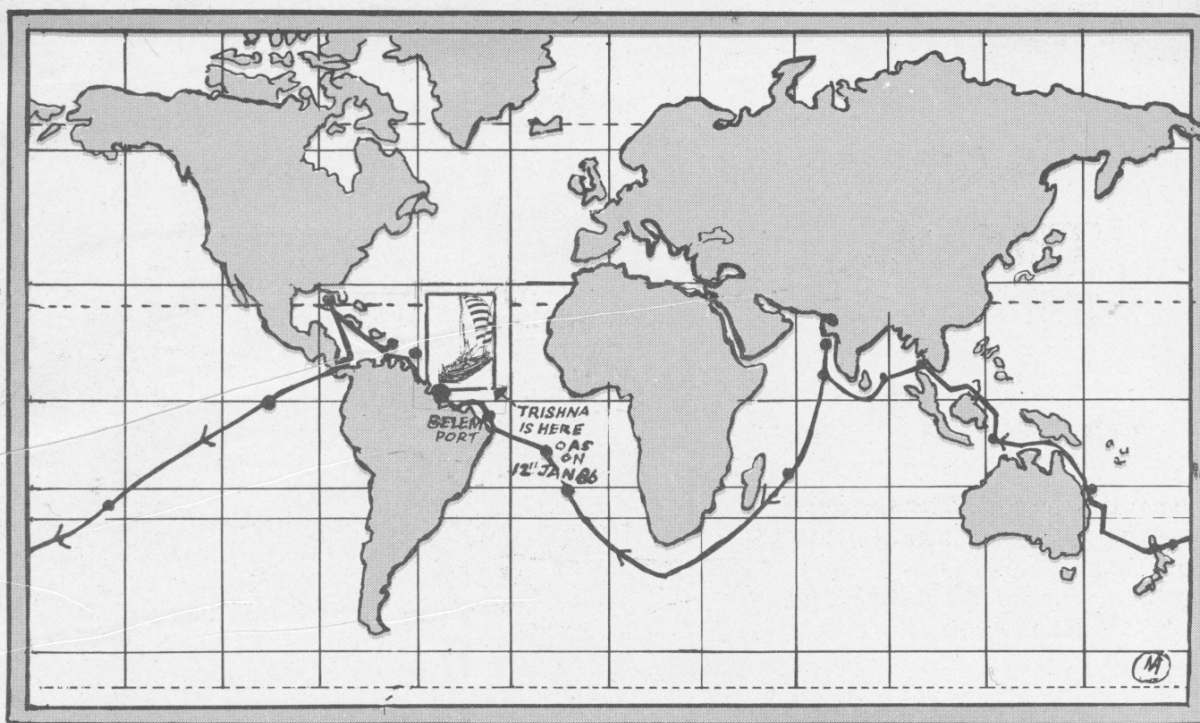


Trishna Sailing Merrily : Past Ascension island, now in the company of Albatrosses.

winds from south east from 20 to 35 knots, with waves whipping upto 20-30 feet. The cyclonic disturbances in the west coast of India produced these strong winds and high waves.

They reached Mauritius two days ahead of schedule and received a warm welcome from the local people and the migrant Indians settled there. The Indian High Commission looked after the crew very well. They were also received by the Governor General and the Prime Minister of Mauritius, who lauded their adventurous spirit.

After checking their boat thoroughly, filling water, buying fresh vegetables and charging their batteries, they left Mauritius at 1945 hours on 30 Oct to begin their longest, non-stop and most difficult part of the Cruise, to round the Cape of Good Hope and reach Saint Helena Island. On this stretch, they met winds upto 40 knots and waves 20-30 feet high. The Cape of Storms or the Cape of Good Hope, as it is commonly called, is a traditionally bad-weather place and yachtsmen had a trying and exacting time in attempting to cross it. As the journey from Mauritius to Saint Helena



was a non-stop 33 days' sail, rations and water were restricted to every crew member. Each member of the crew was only given 2 litres of water per day for washing, drinking, cooking and anything else he wants to do.

They have so far covered 9000 nautical miles in 82 sailing days doing about 110 nautical miles per day. From Saint Helena, they went to Ascension Island, Natal, Belem (Brazil) and will now go to Barbados, Jamaica, through the Panama Canal, Galapagos Island, Tahiti, Auckland, Sydney, through the Torres Strait, Jakarta, Singapore, Colombo and will return back to Bombay.

These officers have fully tested the boat last year, when they sailed from UK to Bombay covering the 13,000 kms distance in three and half months, thus being the first Indians to fully sail the distance from UK to Bombay. They had rough weather in the Bay of Biscay, Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, with winds 50-60 knots and waves 30 to 40 feet high. The officers taking part in this expedition and their duties are : Col TPS Chowdhury (Team Manager, Ship's Business and Photography); Maj KS Rao, SM, (Skipper of the Boat); Maj AP Singh, SM, (Navigation and Photography); Maj AK Singh, SM, (Engine and Electrical); Maj A Bhattacharya, (Administrative Officer at Pune) and Maj SN Mathur, (Administrative Officer at Delhi, Radio and Medical); Capt R Bassi (Ship's Business and Meteorology); Capt S Shekhar (Galley and Medical); Capt C

Bharti (Radio and Rigging); and Lieut N Ahuja, (Radio and Medical).

There will be six Officers on the boat at any one time. Four Officers, Maj KS Rao, SM, Maj AK Singh, SM, Capt S Shekhar, and Capt C Bharti, will attempt to fully sail around the World. The other officers will change enroute. The bad weather and difficult areas likely to be crossed after the Cape of Good Hope are West Indies, the Pacific Ocean, New Zealand, the Great Barrier Reef, Torres Strait, and the Malacca Strait.

Yacht Trishna is 36 feet 6 inches in length, 10 feet 9 inches in width, has a draught of 6 feet 1 inch, and gross weight of 10.5 tons. She has been built by the world-famous builders, Nautor of Finland, and designed by Sparkman and Stephen. She has a sloop rig, a long keel and a skey, making her very sea-kindly in rough weather and respected by yachtsmen all over the world. The yacht was renamed 'TRISHNA' which means an urge to attain and accomplish a deep-rooted desire. The boat has been fitted with all the basic instruments, speed log, radio direction finder, VHF and HF radios, satellite navigation system, a six-man life raft, a rubber dinghy, and other safety equipment. Her 50 gallon water supply capacity has been increased to 180 gallons. It has a 23 HP diesel engine with a 15 gallon fuel tank, which is used for entry and exit from ports and during emergencies.

(As on 12 January 1986)